

Discerning the way forward

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*Last September, the NBA Incubate Initiative welcomed its largest SENT Seminar cohort yet! The annual four-day training opportunity equips Disciples social entrepreneurs of faith for leadership and change as they nurture emerging health and social service ministries. This project, the **Good Life Care Resource Center**, will support immigrants and low-income individuals and families in Koreatown and downtown Los Angeles area by providing translation services, childcare, and other services.*



From September 12th to September 15th, 2018, I went to St. Louis with Judy Hong, the Managing Director of the Good Life Care Center, to attend the NBA Sent Seminar 2018, an incubate program that assists the establishment and registration of non-profit organizations in the denomination. I participated to gain more knowledge on how we should continue. After attending the SENT Seminar I began to notice that we are on track and ahead.

At the moment, the Good Life Care Center, a non-profit organization, is preparing to focus on two objectives that will be centered around Koreatown and Downtown Los Angeles.

The first objective is to open the Good Life Care Resource Center, in which ministries are available to assist immigrants and low-income individuals who cannot speak English or cannot receive the benefits from the government; we will prepare translators. Through a consultant, we will be able to provide resources in three languages. If anyone cannot visit our center, they can simply contact us and we will be pleased to provide them with transportation.

The second objective is to support low-income families and single parents by purchasing a building for an afterschool, daycare, preschool, and Korean Saturday school program that will be provided by the center. Parents and families will be able to give their children an education that will be entirely free and the teachers /

directors, who will be 1.5 or second generation, will get paid to guide the students in different subjects.

There are nineteen members who are contributing to the Good Life Care Center and the age range is from high schoolers to seniors. Together, first, 1.5, and second generation individuals have assembled to provide resources in this community to immigrant families and single parents who are in difficult financial situations.

It has been twelve years since I have lived in Los Angeles and for ten years, I worked a full-time job while working as a minister. After contributing to missionary work for 8 years, I concluded that I needed a new solution. I came to the idea that in this new era, churches should change to become a place where people can do missionary work outside.

The Good Life Care Center held its first meeting in March of 2018 but the Vision of Jesus Church developed this idea for eight years which is why we prioritized the members of the church. Because I needed board members when this organization started, I created a basic mission statement as a document and shared my visions with those who have been with me for more than ten years. Among the people I met with, six members within my congregation agreed to support this organization and six others who attend different churches and have different jobs also joined as new members, which led to the twelve attendees in the first meeting.

Soon, I met new people, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) Korean staff. I was able to gain more knowledge about mental health, attend seminars and meetings related to mental health as a religious leader, and meet with other religious leaders in Koreatown. This August, I started to participate in the Asian Pacific Islander Underserved Community Communities (API UsCC) meetings and thought about how much I can do for the Korean community after learning about the activities LACDMH does for the Asian and Pacific Islander community.

Currently, the most unfortunate factor is that even though LACDMH has various types of resources, community members cannot receive the help they can get since most are immigrants who do not communicate in English. It is not very significant since all the information is in English. We need to become the bridge for the members in the community so that they can get the resources they need in their home language.

There are several non-profit organizations who are vendors of the LACDMH, but in reality, there are still not enough services to provide to multi-ethnic groups in Koreatown and Downtown Los Angeles. We will need a lot more financial aid in the future and we all know that this is not an easy mission but with the Pacific Southwest Region (PSWR), different non-profit organizations, and government agencies hand-in-hand, I believe that this organization will play the role of light and salt to the members of this community. We are planning to make the final arrangements by the end of 2018 and process our objectives in 2019. Looking back in the time that has passed, I hope that the NBA will continue with this non-profit organization since it is best fit for the denomination and community. With a great spirit and mind, I am looking forward to working together so that we can plan to connect with others to help change the community.

The NBA incubates new ministries, supporting social entrepreneurs of faith who are serving their communities in a variety of innovative ways and empowering these Disciples-led health and social service projects to focus on growth, impact, and sustainability. Learn more at nbacares.org/incubate